

Winter 2009

INDIANA STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT FUND

Member Newsletter

Indiana Educators Consult with TRF

In an attempt to better serve its members, the Indiana State Teachers' Retirement Fund (TRF) recently held the first ever Teachers' Advisory Panel. The group, consisting of 11 educators from different locations throughout Indiana, met to discuss TRF's current methods of communication and ways TRF could improve members' overall experiences in the future.

Members of the Advisory Panel will serve as liaisons between TRF and those involved with the schools at a local level. It is TRF's hope that these representatives will bring to attention the issues most important to TRF members, and, as a result, help TRF to improve its overall service and efficiency. The Advisory Panel will meet quarterly, with the next meeting scheduled for January 2009.

TRF would like to thank the following individuals and their school corporations for volunteering their time and opinions:

Janel Bonomo – Vigo County School Corporation, Terre Haute, Indiana

Troy Bensing – New Albany-Floyd County School Corporation, New Albany, Indiana

John Eastes – Fort Wayne Community Schools, Fort Wayne, Indiana

David Foutz – Elkhart Community School Corporation, Elkhart, Indiana

Heidi Hennigar – Duneland School Corporation, Chesterton, Indiana

James Kimsey – Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, Evansville, Indiana

Jeff Loveless – Mooresville Consolidated School Corporation, Mooresville, Indiana

Brad Sever – MSD Wayne Township, Indianapolis, Indiana

Aleasia Stewart – Richmond School Corporation, Richmond, Indiana

Sharon Tower – Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, Columbus, Indiana

Brian Weidman – Center Grove Community Schools, Greenwood, Indiana

Don't Delay...Call Today!

Members who are within two years of retirement are encouraged to call and schedule a retirement benefit appointment with TRF. Our staff of benefit specialists can not only provide you with an estimate of your retirement benefit, but can also answer any questions you may have about the options available to you at retirement. To schedule an appointment, call our office at (317) 232-3860 or toll-free at (888) 286-3544.

Questions About Service Credit?

We Have Answers!

Take a moment to familiarize yourself with some of the basics of service credit and vesting. Stay tuned to next quarter's Member Newsletter to read about additional or enhancement service credit that may be available to you free or for purchase.

What Service Counts Toward Vesting? And What IS vesting?

In order to receive a monthly pension benefit, Indiana law requires members to become vested. Vesting means that you have enough years of service to retire — but you still can not retire until you are age eligible. To become vested, a member must accumulate 10 years of creditable service. The following types of service may be recognized and counted toward vesting:

- **Regular Indiana Teaching Service:** A member may earn one year of creditable service when 120+ days are worked in a state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). One-half year of creditable service is earned for 60 to 119 days of service worked in a state fiscal year. All active members are entitled to one day of service credit if the member works for a standard workday or any fraction thereof. Service arising out of jury duty, sick leave, or worker's compensation may be included.
- **Substitute Teaching Service:** Substitute teachers who are TRF members may earn one year of service credit if they work 120+ days in a fiscal year or between 60 and 119 days per year over two fiscal years. Service credit may also be purchased for time spent substitute teaching before becoming a TRF member.
- **Approved Leaves of Absence:** Certain Leaves of Absence may count toward the vesting requirement. TRF is generally able to recognize leaves granted by a school corporation to the member for the following reasons:
 1. Sabbatical for improvement of professional skills through the following:
Advanced Study; Work Experience; Teacher Exchange Programs; Approved Educational Travel
 2. Disability or Sick Leave
 3. Pregnancy
 4. Adoption Leave
- **Service in a position covered by the Public Employees' Retirement Fund (PERF):** A member who has service with both PERF and TRF has the two accounts combined at retirement. The service and money from both funds are used to compute the retirement benefit. No member may receive more than one year of service credit for any one fiscal year in the event of service covered by both PERF and TRF rendered during the same period.
- **Military Service (if certain requirements are met):** In some cases, military service may count toward the 10-year vesting requirement. Under the Federal Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Act of 1994 (USERRA), eligible military service earned after the implementation of the Act may be added to a member's account and counted toward vesting. Eligible military service earned prior to the effective date of the Act cannot be considered toward vesting or added to a member's account until after 10 years of active TRF service is earned (the member is vested).

Because of the many intricacies and exceptions regarding service credit and vesting, it is important to ensure service you expect to be counted can actually be recognized. TRF can perform a service credit analysis for all members. For more detailed information regarding service credit, you may consult the Member Handbook, which is available at www.in.gov/trf or call our office at (317) 232-3860 or toll-free at (888) 286-3544.

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